



Put on your creative thinking cap and come up with a catchy name for our newsletter. Send your thoughts and ideas via e-mail to the FRO at stephen.p.norton@usmc.mil

We will recognize your contribution in an upcoming edition. For your efforts you will have our sincere gratitude, and who knows, we might even come up with some sort of prize.

UPCOMING FAMILY EVENTS

**Save the date:
Saturday, April 18, 2009**

Marine Barracks Washington,
Annex Field
Spring Fling Fun Day
Food, Games and Activities
More details to follow

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

We are always looking for volunteers from our community who are willing to offer their time in support of our Family Readiness Program. Contact the FRO for further information and specifics



FAMILY READINESS CONTACT INFORMATION

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202-433-4881

Marine Family Team Building
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703-693-4840

Counseling and Advocacy
Ms. Alice Stauffer
703-614-7204

Relocation Program
Mr. Willie Acevedo
703-614-720

Exceptional Family Member Program
Ms. Linda Clark
703-614-7200

School Liaison
Mr. Michael Flaherty
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Personal Financial Planner
Mr. Jim Murphy
703-614-6950

Lifelong Learning Office
Mr. Sam Bagwell
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Children, Youth and Teens
Ms. Mary Sue Rainey
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Career Resource Management Center
Ms. Stephanie Hechtkopf
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FAMILY READINESS NEWS

February 2009



Greetings to the families of Marine Barracks Washington

Welcome to the first edition of the Family Readiness Newsletter for Marine Barracks, Washington, DC. This newsletter is meant to keep you and your family informed about the new and changing Family Readiness Program. Upcoming editions will be published on a quarterly basis, and will discuss the new methods of communicating to families, new tools for volunteer opportunities, current events, and even a look back at some of the events that have already taken place.

Our Family Readiness Program has changed and will continue to evolve in the future. The fact that we now have a full-time civilian FamilyReadinessOfficeronboardisabigstepinthe implementation of the new program. I encourage everyone to come together as we move forward with new Family Readiness Assistant Training, new **L.I.N.K.S** Training programs, and the implementation of other parts of the Family Readiness Program.

This newsletter is one of the first steps in establishing effective two way communications between the command and our families. We all know that family life within the barracks community is quite different from any other Marine Post. Our families are spread out over a wide geographical area, and additionally, each of our units has a very different contribution to make to the overall mission. In spite of those challenges we must find ways to be inclusive and use all of our resources to the best of our capability. Through this cooperative effort and spirit, we will be able to improve the quality of life for all of us, while we remain focused on the



important mission that we need to accomplish.

As I mentioned, this newsletter is a part of a two way communication program. We want to hear from you, we need to know what is on your mind. We welcome any thoughts or ideas for additional information that should be covered in this newsletter in the future. Let us know about the subjects that are important to you so that we can share those ideas with everyone.

The importance of the health and stability of our families is perhaps best summarized in the following phrase:

Mission First—Marines, Sailors, and their Families Always

In closing, please allow me to extend my best wishes and those of my family to each of you and yours.

Semper Fidelis,

Colonel Andrew Smith

MEET THE FAMILY READINESS OFFICER



Hello, my name is Steve Norton and I am pleased to be the Family Readiness Officer (FRO) for Marine Barracks, Washington, DC. I have been onboard since mid-August. In other parts of this newsletter, you will read about our program and my hopes for it. Let me take this opportunity to tell you just a little bit about who I am.

I was born and raised in Weymouth, MA a suburb, 20 miles south of Boston. After finishing high school, I enlisted in the Air Force and served for 4 years, spending time in Texas, Arizona, and Oklahoma, with an overseas tour in Turkey. After my service time, I returned home, began my career, married, and began to raise a family. At the same time, I attended college on a part-time basis under the G.I. Bill. I am a graduate of Northeastern University in Boston; I hold a Bachelors Degree in Marketing and an Associates Degree in Retail Management.

I come to Marine Barracks Washington after a management career, which allowed me to oversee operations, manage sales functions, build programs, and above all gave me the chance to work with some wonderful people. Throughout my business career, I have always been involved in civic, social, and other charitable and volunteer efforts. I have served as a member of Rotary International where I am a

Past President of my local club, served as an Area Director, and led a Group Study Exchange Team to England in 1997. As part of my community involvement, I hosted a local cable television show for more than 6 years. For the past 6 years, I worked on the staff of the American Red Cross at both the local chapter and national headquarters level.

Since arriving here, I have become more excited about the opportunities to work with all the Marines, Sailors, and family members on the newly revised Family Readiness Program. It is my hope that we can build on and improve on a two way communication program between the command and family members. I want to function as a resource for information to be sure that all Marines and their family members know of the programs that are in place to help them.

Please understand that I am here to serve you and your family, and as a "Civilian FRO" that is my only mission. The Marine Corps has made the statement that all Marines have *"The family that you were born into, the family you were sworn into and the family that you married into."* I am excited about the opportunity to serve you and all of those family components.

I want to thank everyone for a warm welcome, and I look forward to working with all of you. Please know that I welcome your phone calls, and e-mails. In order to go forward, I need to know what is on your mind. Above all, I extend my thanks to each of you for the great effort you make in supporting the Marines of the Barracks Community.

Steve

THE NEW FAMILY READINESS PROGRAM

We have all heard a lot of discussion about the "New Family Readiness Program," the question at this point may be just what is "New" about it? Here are a few of the new points and items to consider.

As stated on page 1 of the Transition Supplement to the Family Readiness Officer Handbook:

"The new family readiness program is characterized by the Marine Corps shouldering its responsibility by holding Marines accountable for attaining and maintaining personal and family readiness, expanding the definition of family, appropriately utilizing volunteers, and committing the necessary financial, personnel, and technological resources to resolve the shortcomings associated with the former program."

Transition to the new program is well underway in four key areas:

1. A full-time civilian Family Readiness Officer
2. New technology tools
3. A volunteer management program
4. Increased installation support staff

NEW TECHNICAL TOOLS

Watch for information concerning two new tools that have been instituted by the Marine Corps to support the Family Readiness Program. Here are some basic highlights.

Mass Communication Tool (MCT):

This robust communication tool will allow for the dissemination of information to many different parties at one time. Basically, every Marine will be able to designate up to four points of contact (spouse, parent, child etc.). Each of these contacts will be allowed up to ten communication paths (home phone, cell phone, various e-mail and text message addresses).

TRAINING SESSIONS

L.I.N.K.S. Training for Spouses:

We recently held a L.I.N.K.S. Training session for spouses at the Barracks. We were pleased to have 18 people in attendance including married Marines and their spouses, engaged Marines and their fiancés, as well as a number of Marines who will be getting married in the near future.

PREP

In conjunction with the Chaplain's Office we recently held a PREP Session for people planning to marry or those who just want to "Refresh" their communication and relationship skills. Once again, we were pleased to have 16 people join us for this training.

Watch this newsletter and the Marine Barracks Web site (www.mbw.usmc.mil) for upcoming training dates.

Arrangements can be made to provide child care while people are attending any of these sessions. You can discuss the particulars with the FRO.

Using this Internet based tool, the command will be able to send communications to all parties using, voice mail, e-mail or text with the push of one button. In addition, the message will be delivered to all parties at virtually the same time.

Implementation of this program is in progress.

Volunteer Tracking Tool (VTT):

This is another new Internet based tool that will help us to match volunteers to specific volunteer opportunities, promote new sessions, and track the number of volunteer hours logged by an individual. Most importantly, this tool is being used throughout the Marine Corps, so all volunteer information, including hours volunteered, goes with the individual if they PCS to a new duty station.